



Roman Bronze Knife Handle - Lion Attacking A Wild Boar - Roman Gaul, Archaeology



480 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Bronze

Length : 7 cm

Height : 3 cm

Description

Roman bronze knife handle - Lion attacking a wild boar - Roman Gaul, archaeologyA rare decorative element from the handle of a Roman knife, made of cast bronze and entirely carved in the round. This remarkable small sculpture depicts a lion pouncing on a wild boar in a highly dynamic hunting scene. Despite its small size, the group possesses a truly sculptural quality, with volumes clearly defined on all sides and a composition designed to be appreciated in the round. Hunting scenes are a well-documented motif on Roman knives from the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, particularly in the context of Roman Gaul. Depictions related to venatio--a spectacular form of hunting that held an important place in the Roman imagination--feature various animals and

Dealer

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combinations. The panther-and-deer pairing is particularly common. We also encounter the motif of a dog chasing or confronting a hare, as illustrated by several examples preserved in museum collections, notably at the Sens Museum and the Winchester Museum. The confrontation between a lion and a wild boar, on the other hand, seems much less common on this type of object. The wild boar may, for example, be depicted alongside a dog, as on an example held at the British Museum (inv. 2975). This group, therefore, stands out for its particularly original combination of these two animals. Beyond its decorative nature, this pairing may have had a symbolic dimension, particularly in the context of the early Roman presence in Gaul. The lion, an animal strongly associated with Roman power and authority, could be contrasted with the wild boar, an animal particularly prevalent in Gallic iconography and often considered to carry strong symbolic significance in the Celtic world. This interpretation must, however, be approached with caution: the existence of a political or symbolic message cannot be asserted with certainty based on this single element alone. It nevertheless constitutes a particularly interesting hypothesis given the nature of the object, its iconography, and its presumed chronological context. The lion also occupies an important place in Roman military imagery, with some soldiers depicted wearing a lion's pelt or a lion's head—an attribute associated with strength and *virtus*. This object is particularly captivating due to its extreme iconographic rarity, the quality of its modeling, and its miniature size. It offers a unique insight into Roman material culture and imagery in Gaul. Dimensions: 3 cm high; 7 cm long. Price excludes shipping costs. Police Registry Ref.: A227. Professional Antique Dealer - Guarantee & peace of mind when purchasing. As a professional antique dealer, I am committed to offering only authentic items that have been carefully selected and are legally marketable. Each piece is chosen for its historical, aesthetic, or collectible value.

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